

*Oh, how good and pleasant it is,
when brethren live together in unity!*

—Psalm 133:1



FRIDAY, MARCH 3

In the days of my childhood, our home was connected to every house on the block. Our block was connected to adjacent streets that brought together houses, corner stores and schools, which made up our neighborhood. During the season of Lent, I am especially reminded of my 1960s neighborhood. On Ash Wednesday, everyone had ashes on their foreheads. In the following weeks, extra effort was made to be in church to pray, fast and give alms. On Fridays, we all ate fish. I felt that each of us – teachers, store clerks, the elderly, parents and small children – were keepers of these forty days and forty nights. These remembrances taught me that my neighborhood was a community of faith.

Our faith teaches that Jesus is Alpha and Omega. Lent is a return to the beginning – and a look to beyond the end. During this unique time, we follow the Way of the Cross. The cross is that unique sign that connects God with the entire world for all time. I give thanks to God for the deep significance of Lent: connection, togetherness, solidarity and hope in Jesus our Redeemer.

—Richard J. Aguilar